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# BULLETIN

OF

## THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

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### FURNITURE EXHIBITION

A special exhibition of furniture will be held at the Museum during the month of November. The collection will be confined to English and American examples representing the work of cabinet-makers of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Among the earlier pieces of special interest will be shown a carved Bible box of the middle of the seventeenth century, some carved chests and a rare leather-covered traveling chest or trunk of the English oak period, bearing the date of 1686.

Philadelphia, in the eighteenth century, was one of the principal centers for the manufacture of the best mahogany furniture in Chippendale and Sheraton styles, and the collection will include many fine pieces from the old families of Philadelphia and vicinity, and representative examples from other sections of the country.

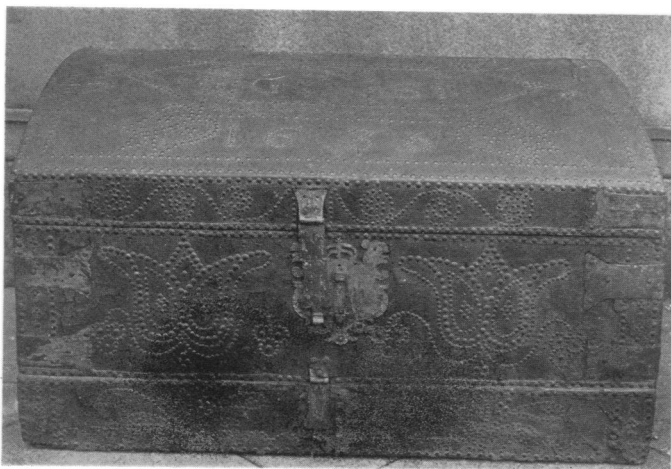
Esther Singleton, in "The Furniture of Our Forefathers" (vol. II, p. 612), gives the following list of Philadelphia cabinet-makers from the Directory for 1785:

"Joseph Allen, William Bromewell, Thomas Brown, Isaac Barnet, Thomas Bowen, Bartholomew Baker, Bryan and Nicholson, Samuel Claphamson, Adam Cressmon, John Douglass, Kearns Dowling, Joseph Dilvan, David Evans, Elfrith and Clarke, Josiah Elfrey, John Easter, William Edward, Alexander Frazer, Ford and Aitken, Christian Fox, Conrad Feerman, Jonathan Gostellow, Thomas George, Daniel Hayes, Edward Hargery, Christian Kearne, Leonard Kislar, John Kreider, Peter Lesler, Nicholas Lloyd, Benjamin Lyndall, John Meyers, William Moore, John Miller, Richard Palmer, William Rigby, George Shaw, John Savidge, Samuel Sime, John Townsend, Thomas Tuft, Daniel Trotter, Sr. and Jr., Francis Triemble, Andrew Vowiller, John Webb, Sr. and Jr., James Watkins, Jacob Wayne, Sr. and Jr., William Wayne, Sarah Williams, Jacob Winnemore and Samuel Walton.

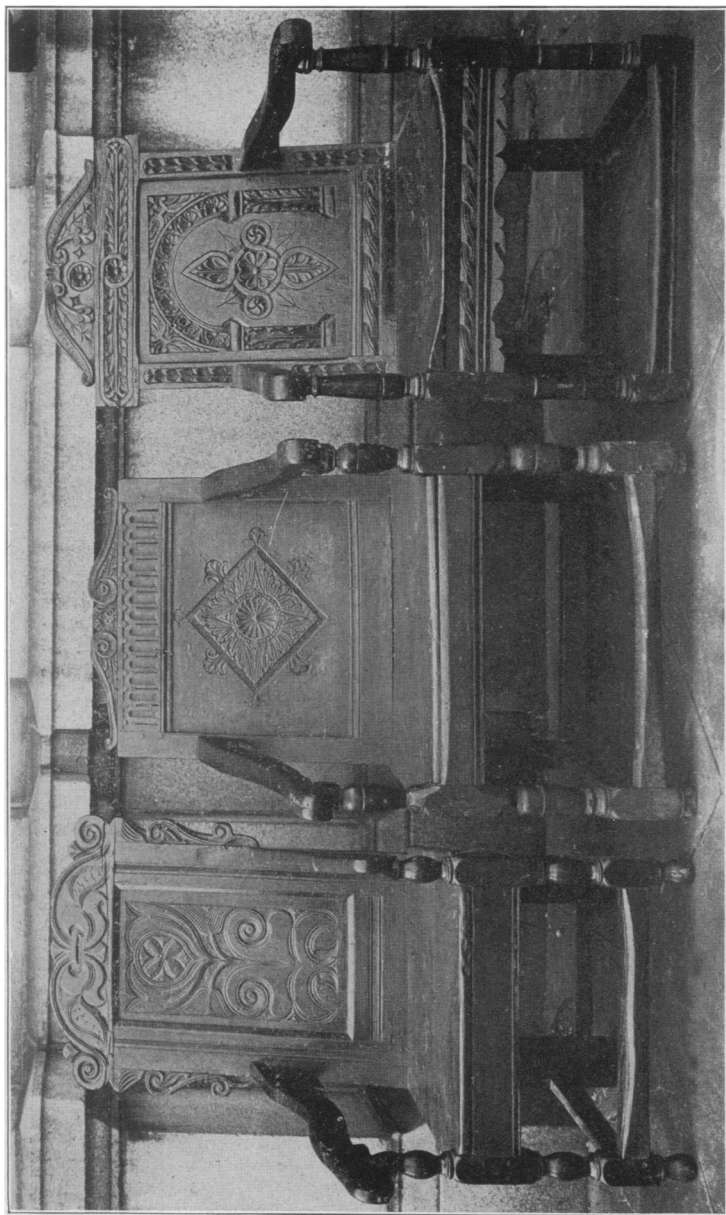
"The Windsor-chair makers were: William Coxe, Ephraim Evans, Benjamin Freeman, John Litchworth, Thomas Miller, Jacob Martin, John Sprow-san, Frances Trumble, William Weddfield, Wear and Cubbin, and John Willis. Chair-makers were George Burford, Ridding Cobly, Paul Hover, Robert Jones, Davenport Marriot, wheel and chair-maker; William Savery, and Joseph Trotter. John Elliott was a looking-glass and medicinal merchant, and James Reynolds, a carver and gilder."



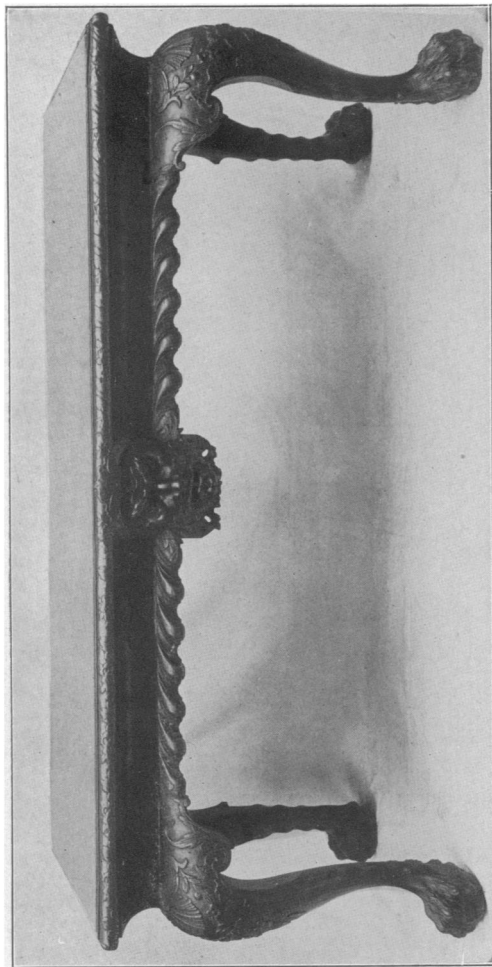
CARVED OAK BIBLE BOX.  
English, Seventeenth Century.



TRAVELING CHEST.  
English, 1686.



WAINSCOT CHAIRS.  
English, Seventeenth Century.



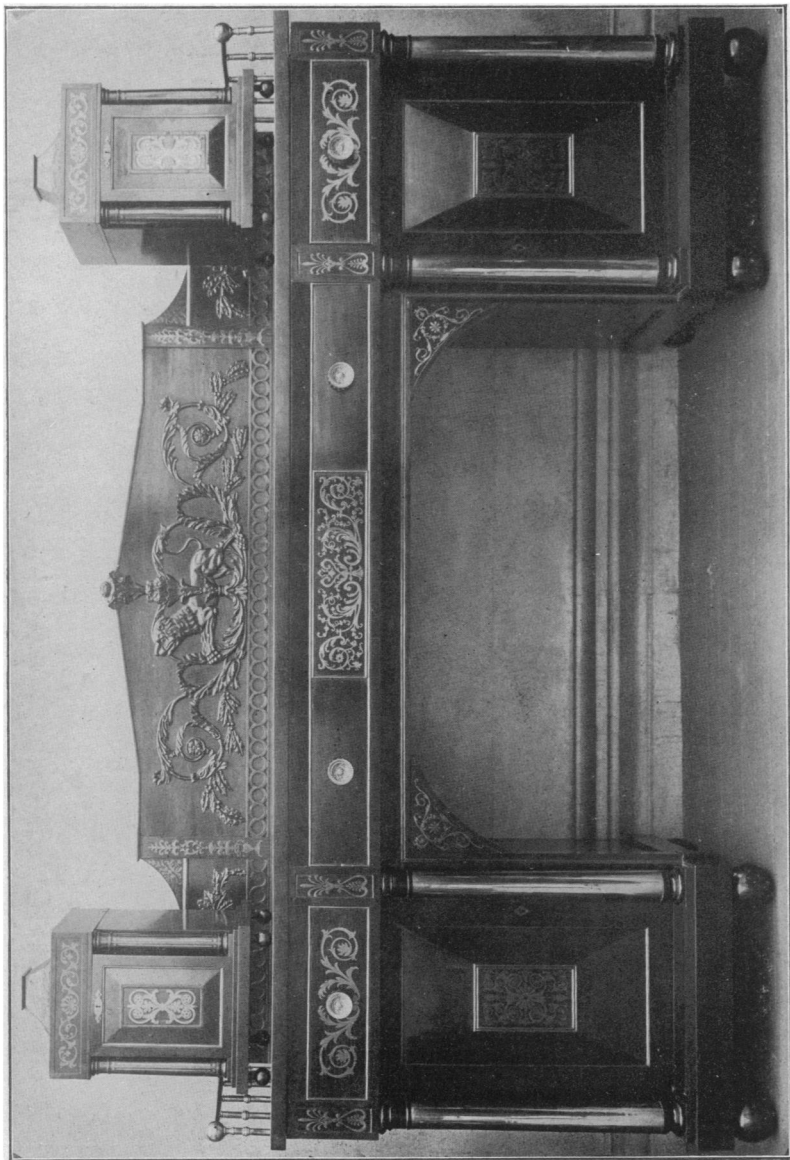
SIDEBOARD TABLE.  
English, Early Georgian,  
1730-1740.

William Savery made furniture in Chippendale style, "at the Sign of the Chair, a little below the Market, in Second street, Philadelphia," as stated by Mr. Luke Vincent Lockwood in "Colonial Furniture in America" (vol. I, p. 110), where a dressing-table or low-boy by this maker is figured. Mr. Lockwood also records the name of James Gillingham, whose advertisement, pasted on a claw-and-ball-foot chair of Chippendale style, belonging to Dr. Frank I. Hammond of Providence, R. I., shows him to have been a "Cabinet and Chair Maker in Second Street between Walnut & Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia."

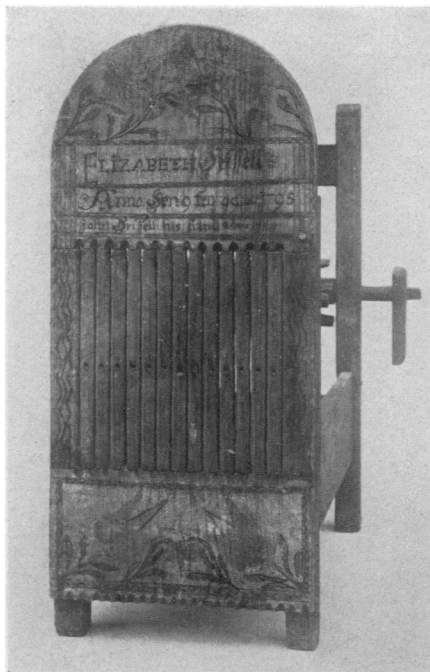
New England furniture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which, while showing the influence of the English schools, possesses marked characteristics of its own, will also be well represented from the collections of prominent collectors.

In many European museums, particularly those of Germany and Switzerland, collections of furniture and utensils, illustrating the domestic life and customs of the people, are shown in separate rooms. No art museums in this country have as yet given special attention to the collection and installation of antiquities of provincial localities where, in former years, the methods of living were uninfluenced by contact with the people of other sections, which is particularly true of the early settlers in Eastern Pennsylvania, who preserved, until recent years, the customs which they had brought with them from the Palatinate and Switzerland. We recognize the arts of the European peasants reflected in the painted wedding chests, the inlaid furniture, the slip-decorated and inscribed pottery, the cast iron stoves with scriptural designs, and the general use of the tulip as a decorative motive. The antiquities of Eastern Pennsylvania, which have been gathered together and will be shown for the first time in this exhibition, include some of these characteristic painted chests; an elaborately inlaid walnut chest bearing the date of 1783 and the name of Maria Kutz, from Kutztown, Berks County; a chest of drawers inlaid with the date 1790; a wardrobe with inlaid date of 1775; decorated cast iron stoves of the eighteenth century; and tulip pottery of the same period. As in the Rhenish provinces of Germany, the household utensils, such as iron toasting forks, lard lamps, stirring spoons and ladles are frequently embellished with incised ornamentations, with dates sometimes inlaid in brass. These relics of the earlier period are now rarely found in use in the German settlements, since the old transplanted customs have gradually disappeared with the coming of a more progressive generation.

Much of the furniture is painted with ornamentation in bright coloring, softened and mellowed by the hand of time. A small loom in the exhibit is embellished on one end with tulips and inscribed "Elizabeth Drissell Anno den 9 ten October, 1795. John Drissell his hand Anno 1795." The chest here shown is painted on the front with blue and black six-pointed stars in white circles and in an arched tulip-bordered central panel occurs the inscription: "Num 8 Sarah Schüppin, Anno Christi 1798, 22 Juni." This would seem to indicate that the owner, Sarah Schüpp, was the possessor of at least seven other chests. A singular feature of the decorated furniture and pottery of the Pennsylvania Germans is the exact dating which was placed upon them, even including the days of the month when they were finished.



AMERICAN MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD.  
French Empire Style, about 1805.  
Bequest of Miss Elizabeth Gratz.



PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN HEDDLE.  
Painted Decoration, Dated 1795.



PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN DOWER CHEST.  
Dated 1798.

The technical side of the subject will not be entirely neglected, as there will be an exhibition of brass furniture handles of different periods and a collection of stencils, used in decorating chairs, settees, tinware, etc., from old American manufactories. These patterns were much in vogue on furniture used in the country districts all through the nineteenth century and the earlier designs are quaint and some of them are more or less pretentious.

It is planned to make the exhibition as representative of the different English periods as possible, and to show the marked styles of cabinet work which prevailed in various sections of this country.



### THE COLLECTION OF FAKES AND REPRODUCTIONS

So much interest has been taken this summer in the display of fakes and reproductions at the Pennsylvania Museum, not only by collectors whom such an exhibit naturally most concerns, but also by the general public, that it has been deemed unwise to withdraw from view a feature the usefulness of which had been demonstrated by so marked a success. It will therefore be continued as a permanent exhibit.

While the thought of carrying out the scheme originated in the mind of the Director of the Museum, it is now found that in some form the idea had germinated in the minds of a number of persons interested in honest antiquarian research.

The commerce of spurious antiquities has reached such proportions that in every museum there should be a chance for the collector to test his judgment with regard to the real value of objects offered him. The expert antiquary in time acquires an instinctive "feeling" about genuine objects which is sometimes bewildering to the untrained eye of the layman. But this cultivated instinct, which by the French is called "flair", of late years has lost much of its value, owing to the class of men who have gone into the business of manufacturing spurious antiquities. Artists and skilled artisans in every country, who possess the inherited ethnic taste of their forefathers, and who from youth have been bred to see and handle such forms as are peculiar to the ancient artists of their race, have found the trade profitable. Assisted when necessary by men of science, chemistry, metallurgy and other sciences have been brought to bear upon the result, until in certain classes of objects, even the eye of the expert connoisseur is deceived by the expert manufacturer. I could tell you of innumerable instances to the point, were I not afraid to hurt the fooled purchaser's feelings. But the story of the gold tiara of Saitaphernes, the workmanship and metallurgy of which passed the scrutiny of the Louvre experts, and which was purchased by the French Government on their verdict at a high figure, is so well-known a fact that there can be no indiscretion in mentioning it. Nor is there in connection with the fraud perpetrated on the authorities of an American museum some years ago, when it was discovered that their fine collection of exquisite Tanagra figurines was largely composed